

mind all that happened eight years ago; but anything in the letter-book or the letters themselves I am perfectly satisfied are correct. They would not be there if they were not.

2401. Mr. Lawson read this letter—this is a letter of the 13th December, 1881—and in it you say to Mr. Lawson: “Seeing that there is a question of the foundations of the north wing not being right would it not be as well some arrangement should be made to do away with the packing altogether.” Do you remember that letter?—Yes, I remember it.

2402. Did you write this in consequence of the ground being worse there than in other parts of the building?—It was soft ground there. At Block No. 1, north, just in front of the bay-window there, the concrete is down somewhere, I think, about 7ft. or 8ft.: it was through black mud, black soil, and we went on till we got to the same clay that we got in the other portions, and further on in front of that there was a bit of a swamp where the engine got stuck.

2403. Did you want the packing done away with in this north wing?—I should have preferred to have had it done away with there and all through, but more particularly there.

2404. Was the concrete getting better or worse towards the end of the job?—I considered it was getting worse.

2405. The older the job got?—Yes.

2406. So that the north wing was unfortunate in having the worst concrete?—I could not exactly say.

2407. There has been a lot of evidence about the concrete in the south wing: you insisted upon a lot of it being taken out; what was the reason for that?—Simply that the concrete was not satisfactory; perhaps I had better say how the packing was put in. The trenches were opened out, and the stone was brought and dumped down on the edge of the ground, or else in the trench; the stones were then planted on the bare ground in the trenches 3in. or 4in. apart, and the concrete was mixed on boards (I have nothing to say about the quantities, &c.; the cement was always there). It was mixed and put on the stones, and whether filled in properly or not, I could not tell: it was supposed to be rammed in between the stones to the thickness of the bed of concrete. If it was 18in. thick it would be brought up in a layer, and when left perhaps it would be 16in., 12in., or 8in. thick, according to the size of packing: fresh stones were placed on top of this and filled in with concrete and brought up to a level, and that is Mr. Gore’s idea of what packing ought to be.

2408. Was the policy of the Contractor all through to pay as little attention as possible to your instructions?—I think that is extremely like what it was. My reason for saying that is that after objecting to certain things on the job, they would not do it for me, and I would come down to town and get instructions that such and such things were to be done, and after that Mr. Gore would come up and totally contradict these. That is the tenor of the letter.

2409. That is the letter of the 5th October, 1882. Were you very wroth over this matter?—I was, there is no doubt about it.

2410. Did you send a copy of that letter to Mr. Ussher?—I did.

2411. You felt very strongly about it?—Yes.

2412. You felt inclined either to give up your office or not to pass the work?—Yes, at the time I did; and I most assuredly should if I had not been a married man; I would have thrown up the whole job altogether.

2413. Was that because you were not getting the work carried out to your satisfaction?—Yes.

2414. Did you consider that the bricks that were put in the building were always up to the mark?—They were not always up to the mark, and I will give you the reason for it: the bricks were all made on the ground except a certain portion of them towards the end of the job; and the first bricks that were made were made with what is called a wire-machine; they were wire-cut bricks. The first that were turned out some of them you could not have better. The clay was good, and had been standing there for some time. It had been got out by the patients, and was well tempered. The bricks came out as sound as anybody could wish. Then after the first work went on this machine had several accidents to it, and there were certain alterations made in it which cracked the bricks, and that accounts for what Mr. Gore says about the bricks going over the tip. They were never burnt. I suppose there would be about a hundred thousand of them. They were put to dry, and they all split in the middle. These are what Mr. Gore, to a certain extent, refers to as being tipped over the bank. There were other bricks made with a lot of lime in them, and they were destroyed in the burning. These bricks were used in building ovens for burning bricks in. The greater portion of the bricks were made with a Bradley and Craven’s machine. After that machine came the bricks were made as a rule direct from the clay bank. The bricks were right enough so far as the making of them was concerned, and then came the question of the burning of the bricks. The bricks were burnt and run out of the kiln and on to the building. I did not consider it fair to have to pass bricks good, bad, and indifferent, to pick them out as they came out of the kiln, and that was one of the causes of bad bricks. The very men, whose interest it was to get as many bricks as they could, being paid by the thousand; they were paid from the time the bricks left the machine to when they went on the building, and they simply ran the bricks out of the kiln right straight through—good, bad, and indifferent. There were good bricks and very bad ones. I have sent specimens down to Mr. Lawson and to Mr. Ussher too.

2415. Do you know anything about this glass question?—Well, there is nothing in the glass question at all. I think it is specified that 24oz. glass shall be used. Well, 24oz. glass, so far as I know, is unknown in the market here; in fact, it is only made on special occasions. There is 21oz. and 26oz., and the Contractor was allowed the benefit of sending out 21oz.

2416. Do you know whether the glass was specially imported?—That I could not say. It came out in cases marked 21oz.

2417. Mr. Gore.] Original cases?—I suppose they were. Some of them came up unopened. They were marked 21oz. on the outside, and some of them were marked 26oz., but whether they were 26oz. glass or not I could not be certain.

2418. Mr. Skinner.] You did not have any weighed?—No.